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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a model of a mentoring program for first year media specialists by exploring existing examples. Qualitative methods were employed in conducting this research. A document review was undertaken to establish accepted mentoring program guidelines. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with coordinators of media programs in three large school systems to define the programs they have in place. A survey of first year media specialists who participated in the mentoring programs of the three school systems studied was distributed to find out if the missions of the mentoring programs were successfully fulfilled and to see if they had any suggestions for improvement. The data were analyzed using the computer software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The majority of first year media specialists agreed that the mentoring program they participated in was a valuable experience that helped them through their initial year. Selecting appropriate mentors who would unselfishly share their time from a pool of experienced school media specialists was vital to the success of the program and the assimilation of the "mentee" into the profession and the community. Those who did not agree that their mentor gave them the support they needed rarely or never communicated with their mentor. Possible problems could be overcome by communicating expectations of both mentors and "mentees" in an orientation session. Of the 22 surveys returned, 11 respondents agreed that they would have called on their mentor for assistance more often if they knew that the mentor was being paid to help them. Administrators of mentoring programs should consider some means of recompense, particularly if meetings are held beyond regular school hours. Stipends and/or staff development credit could be awarded. As a result of this study, a model for a mentoring program for first year media specialists is offered. Appendices include survey forms, sample transcript from interview with county coordinators, and comments written on the survey. (Contains 24 references.) (Author/AEF)

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ED 456 832

MENTORING PROGRAMS FOR FIRST YEAR MEDIA SPECIALISTS: A MODEL

by
Elaine J. Norton

A Research Study

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the
Degree of
Specialist in Education
in
Teaching and Learning
with a concentration in
Library Media Technology
in
The Department of Middle, Secondary and Instructional Technology
in
The College of Education
Georgia State University

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The majority of first year media specialists agreed that the mentoring program they participated in was a valuable experience that helped them through their initial year. Selecting appropriate mentors who would unselfishly share their time from a pool of experienced school media specialist was vital to the success of the program and the assimilation of the mentee into the profession and the community. Mentees who did not agree that their mentor gave them the support they needed rarely or never communicated

with their mentor. Possible problems could be overcome by communicating expectations of both mentors and mentees in an orientation session.

Of the 22 surveys returned, 11 respondents agreed that they would have called on their mentor for assistance more often if they knew that the mentor was being paid to help them. Administrators of mentoring programs should consider some means of recompense, particularly if meetings are held beyond regular school hours. Stipends and/or staff development credit could be awarded. As a result of this study, a model for a mentoring program for first year media specialists is offered.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Ecologists tell us that a tree planted in a clearing of an old forest will grow more successfully than one planted in an open field. The reason it seems, is that the roots of the tree are able to follow the intricate pathways created by former trees and thus embed themselves more deeply. Indeed, over time, the roots of many trees may actually graft themselves to one another, creating an interdependent mat of life hidden beneath the earth. This literally enables the stronger trees to share resources with the weaker so the whole forest becomes healthier. Similarly, human beings thrive best when we grow in the presence of those who have gone before (Zachary, 2000, p. xiii).

During the 2000 - 2001 school year, I was involved in a formal mentoring program for first year media specialists. My mentee had previously worked for me as a media center clerk before she completed her Master's degree in media/technology, so I knew her very well. It was natural for her to feel comfortable about calling me with questions and easy for me to talk to her and give advice.

The 2000 - 2001 school year was also the initial year for the formal mentoring program in my school district. As a mentor, I was not given any guidelines to follow, although I was invited to attend monthly meetings with my mentee. I think I could have done a better job if I had been given more information about the role I had volunteered to perform. Like a new parent, I needed a book of instructions, but there was no "Dr. Spock" available to help me raise a media specialist. I hope that my research will help future mentors and mentees reach a higher level of achievement.

Overview

Ken Haycock describes the school librarian as an outstanding or master teacher with specialized advanced education in the selection, organization, management, and use of learning resources (Haycock, 1999, p. 58). The Master of Education degree for library media specialists includes course work in instructional design, collaborative program planning, team teaching, human relations, selection of learning resources in all formats, the institutional setting, design and production of media, and developmental reading (Haycock, 1999, p. 64). However, even in this comprehensive educational plan, many aspects of the job of the media specialist are not covered, such as use of automation software, fundraising, local procedures for ordering and discarding, and equipment repair. To compound the problem, "new library media specialists generally have assumed the administrative role of the library media program within the first days of employment" (Buddy, 1998, p. 9).

Successful library media specialists are not born; they have to learn their jobs one day at a time. In order to qualify for their positions, library media specialists must complete a graduate degree from a regionally-accredited institution, which includes an internship in their assigned field (Schools, 2001). But the roles and responsibilities are so many and varied that, like teaching, much of it needs to be learned on the job. Each school system, as well as each school, has its "corporate culture." Any new employee must learn the organization, structure, and expectations that culture requires.

In the Southeastern United States, elementary and middle schools accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools are required to have one fulltime media specialist in every school with a student population over 263. When student

enrollment reaches 660, the media specialist may share responsibility for the media center with a full time clerk (Schools, 2001). In high schools with enrollments in excess of 1,000 students, schools are required to have two media specialists (Schools, 2000). This means that in the majority of schools, the media specialist position is unique. There is no one else on the school faculty that has the same roles and responsibilities to model for a beginning media specialist. He or she must look outside the school for that role model. Successful media specialists learn to overcome their isolation by networking with their colleagues. School systems with outstanding media programs address the problem of media specialist isolation by providing opportunities for media specialists to network and work on together. They also address the induction of new media specialists by providing mentoring programs. These formal mentoring programs are designed to provide a new media specialist with a designated non-critical advisor – a mentor. "The mentor is a coach, listening to and encouraging ideas of the protégé, suggesting refinements, challenging the viability of ideas, when needed." (Van Deusen, 1995, p. 30)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to develop a model of a mentoring program for first year media specialists by exploring existing examples. Qualitative methods were employed in conducting this research. A document review was undertaken to establish accepted mentoring program guidelines. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with coordinators of media programs in three school systems to define the programs they have in place. A survey of first year media specialists who participated in the mentoring programs of the three school systems studied was distributed to find out if the mission of the mentoring programs were successfully fulfilled and to see if they had any suggestions for improvement.

Research Questions

In order to create a model of a formal mentoring program to induct neophyte media specialists into the field, three questions will be explored in this study. (1) What are the goals and components of a mentor program model in any field? (2) How are current mentoring programs for first year media specialists designed? (3) How could these mentoring program designs be improved?

Definitions of Terms

The vocabulary used in the study will be defined as follows:

Mentor – An experienced media specialist who has been selected to provide assistance and guidance to a first year media specialist in a formal mentoring program.

Mentee (protégé) – A first year media specialist who participates in a formal mentoring relationship with an experienced media specialist.

Mentoring –

> A nurturing process in which a skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional development and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé. (Anderson & Shannon, 1988, p. 38)

Delimitations

This study was conducted in three middle to large school districts in the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. Three media services coordinators were interviewed to determine the structure of the formal mentoring programs they designed for their first year media specialists. The first year media specialists surveyed in this study were current participants in a formal mentoring program. No attempt was made to include prior participants.

Statement of Limitations

The data presented in this study was accurate only to the extent that the informants were honest in reporting their true perceptions. Results of this study are valid only to the extent the instruments are reliable.

Significance of the Study

When new media specialists begin working in the media center, they often find that their former perceptions of the job are different from the reality. "The roles and responsibilities of library media specialists have changed in response to computer and media technologies, and school reform initiatives" (Buddy, 1998, p. 1). Questions constantly arise concerning best practices and methods of media center management.

Many medium sized to large school systems have developed formal mentoring programs to provide individual assistance for new media specialists. This study will examine the framework of three of these programs. Media services coordinators will be interviewed to find out how the program in each system is organized. New media specialists who have participated in the programs this year will be surveyed to find out if their mentoring programs provided assistance in a timely manner and if they have suggestions to improve them.

By studying these three mentoring programs, a model for future formal mentoring programs to induct neophyte media specialists will be developed. The resulting model could be used in similar school systems.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this review of the literature, informal and formal mentoring programs will be contrasted. The steps common to successful formal programs will be outlined and the beneficial outcomes will be specified.

The term "mentor" has its origin in Greek mythology. Mentor was:

> The son of Alcumus on Ithaca, and elderly friend of Odysseus. He was charged by the king to watch over his son Telemachus and his palace while he was fighting in the Trojan War. The goddess Athena often assumed Mentor's shape when she visited Telemachus and Odysseus. In modern English the tutor's name has become eponym for a wise, trustworthy counselor or teacher. (Lindermans, 1995-2000)

In library literature, articles that study mentoring offer many different definitions for the term. In this paper, a mentor is defined as an experienced media specialist who has been selected to provide assistance and guidance to a first year media specialist in a formal mentoring program. But Galbraith and Zelenak (1991) have provided a more inspiring definition for a mentor: a powerful emotional and passionate interaction whereby the mentor and protégé experience personal, professional, and intellectual growth and development (p. 126). The mentoring process can be divided into two types: informal and formal.

Informal Mentoring

"Informal mentoring is a relationship that occurs that is unplanned, and, in most cases, not expected. A certain 'chemistry' emerges drawing two individuals together for the purpose of professional, personal, and psychological growth and development"

(Golian, 1996, p 102). In an informal mentoring relationship, encouragement and friendship are of paramount importance. It is the blessed beginner who "accidentally" finds someone that will patiently take time to instruct, advise, and nurture him or her. (Paris, 2000, p. 11). Unfortunately, when left to chance, many new jobholders do not find mentors to support them through the preliminary steps of their careers.

One if the participants in Buddy's survey of new media specialists commented:

> I've pretty much had to learn things about being a library media specialist on my own. No one at the school has any empathy or understands what I do and it can be VERY frustrating. I owe a great deal of gratitude to the other library media specialists is the county for their help. There needs to be a better system for new LMSs. It has been a very difficult 2 years. (Buddy, 1998, p. 54)

Formal Mentoring

A formal or sponsored mentoring program is the premeditated process that is the result of a planned and operating mentoring program. It is a procedure designed to reach a variety of specific goals and purposes, defined within the setting in which it operates (Golian, 1996, p. 103). The goals of the mentoring program may vary with the setting, but such programs can be beneficial to the institution, the mentor, and the mentees (Wojewodzki, 1998, p. 2). By making them part of the organizational culture, mentoring programs can be institutionalized (Cargill, 1989, p. 13).

> Librarians work in organizations -- often very complex organizations. Even a librarian in a one-person library (public, school, corporate) is part of a community which that library serves. A newly hired librarian must learn about a new work setting and culture, find his or her way around the new environment, meet new people, and learn the spoken and unspoken rules. One must learn to communicate effectively, think critically, meet promotion requirements and professional expectations, work in groups, to name just a few activities. (Johnson, 1997, p. 1, 6)

Parris emphasizes the importance of mentoring programs to the growth and vitality of libraries. The larger the organization, the more likely it is to institute a

formalized mentoring program so that all new hires can learn from an experienced professional (Paris, 2000, p. 11).

Formal Mentoring Program Steps

In a formal mentoring program, the following processes or steps are common to most designs:

Step 1: Recruitment and Screening of Mentors and Mentees
Step 2: Orientation and Training of Mentors and Mentees
Step 3: Length and Frequency of Mentoring Relationships
Step 4: Matching Mentors and Mentees
Step 5: Continuous Evaluation of the Mentoring Relationship (Golian, 1996)

Recruitment of Mentors

The first step in a formal mentoring program is the recruitment and screening of mentors. In their research, Golian (1996) and Galbraith (1991) found that successful mentors possessed good communication skills. They had a wide range of professional skills and resources as well as a willingness to share these skills with others. They had a reputation for respecting differences in opinions and challenging ideas not people. They demonstrated a history of encouraging and motivating others and helping them to advance. The best mentors displayed a sound and seasoned knowledge of the organization, including its political structure. They did not mind sharing their time and effort to invest in developing effective professional relationships. Given organizational support, their normal work responsibilities did not suffer (Golian, 1996, p. 104).

Cargill discusses the process of identifying mentors for future leaders in librarianship and found that a mentor with particular talents, even without a large measure of power, would be helpful to a protégé. If they are aware of developments in the field and, in the role of a mentor, willing to provide career counseling, they can facilitate the decisions determining career direction (Cargill, 1989, p. 13).

In Iowa City, Iowa, van Deusen and Kraus (1995) were involved in a mentoring program for library media specialists. They have identified the personal attributes of successful mentors as being confident, secure, flexible, altruistic, warm and caring. These same characteristics have also been identified in studies of effective library media specialists (p. 29). They propose that successful mentors

> are successful library media professionals. To have the power to advocate for their protégé, they must be respected by other library media professionals and by teachers and administrators in their schools and in the district. They are knowledgeable about their work, about the policies and procedures of their district, aware of the idiosyncrasies of the role library media specialists play locally, and outstanding in their ability to communicate. Mentors are teachers. They must be able to analyze tasks, to listen actively, to assess work, to nurture, to challenge, to provide constructive feedback. (p. 30)

Selection of Mentees

For new members of the institution to learn from their mentors, they must be good students. They need to have a disposition to learn. They must be willing to ask questions, to listen, and to take advice. They need a desire to grow professionally and care about their professional image (Van Deusen, 1995, p. 30). In their research, both Golian (1996) and Galbraith (1991) identified the characteristics of successful mentees. They found that they were tactful, had good listening skills, the ability to accept help from others, and a desire to work towards professional growth. They displayed a positive attitude, a desire to learn new things, an eagerness to cooperate, and a willingness to carry out obligations, activities, and commitments. They demonstrated an ability to see different points of view, to object diplomatically, to show appreciation for help received and to handle setbacks. The best mentees were able to ask for advise and actually use it. They were able to work hard and juggle several tasks at once and were not "desperate or clingy" (Golian, 1996, p. 105).

Training Mentors and Mentees

To be effective, the mentor needs to have a definition of their roles and responsibilities. This can be accomplished in an orientation session where they can be given guidance about the role of mentor. That role is not one of a supervisor, but rather one of an advocate and role model. One of the most important responsibilities is to be a good listener, and "recognize that the protégé sees his or her concerns as crucial and immediate" (Van Deusen, 1995, p. 30). Feinman-Nemser (2001) studied an exemplary mentor of new teachers, concluding that the following factors influence the character and quality of the mentorship process: the definition a mentor assigns the role, the type of preparation and support the mentor receives, the time available for the mentor to work with the mentee, and whether the culture of teaching reinforces the mentor's work (p. 15). For some, the mentor is "a role model, advocate, sponsor, counselor, guide, developer of skills and intellect, listener, host, coach, challenger, visionary, balancer, friend, sharer, facilitator, resource provider, confirmor, and/or protector" (Golian, 1996, p. 105).

According to Feinman-Nemser (1999), the support that mentors of teachers can give to their mentees can fit in one of two categories: instruction-related support and psychological support. Instruction-related support includes assisting the novice with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to be successful in the classroom and school, while psychological support is aimed at building the protégé's sense of self and ability to handle stress. The second category of support can also be called "a form of therapeutic guidance" and it can be argued that it is more important than the first (p. 5). Gold emphasizes that the inability of new teachers to handle the pressures of the profession is a

major factor in both unsuccessful teaching as well as in decisions to leave the field. "Lack of self-confidence, conflicts between personal life and professional requirements, and inability to handle stress have undermined many otherwise promising teachers." (Gold, 1996, p. 562) The psychological support provided by a sympathetic mentor can help the novice learn to handle the stresses inherent in their new situation.

Relationship of Mentors and Mentees

The relationship between the mentor and mentee is dynamic and changes over time. Golian (1996) define the phases of this relationship as initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition. Initiation is the beginning of the relationship, when it becomes important to both mentor and mentee, and can last from six months to one year. The second phase, cultivation, can last from two to five years. Both the mentor and the mentee will find that the positive expectations developed during the initiation phase are continuously tested against reality. The separation or third phase of the relationship marks significant changes. The mentee experiences both a new independence and autonomy, as well as turmoil, anxiety, and loss. In the final phase, redefinition, the relationship moves on to either a peer like friendship or one that is characterized by hostility and resentment (p. 106).

Unlike mentorship among teachers, library media specialist mentors and mentees do not always work in the same building. In many schools there is only one media specialist on the staff. A plan for efficient communication needs to be made from the beginning of the relationship. Some mentoring programs recommend communicating at least monthly (Thornbury, 1992, p. 8). Parris (2000) advocates the use of e-mail as being far easier than playing phone tag. E-mentoring allows easy communication between two persons in different libraries in different locations. With e-mail there is a time gap

between sending e-mail and it being received and read. Another draw back with e-mail is that it is only text based, and does not allow for face-to-face communication. It is also dependent on both parties having computer expertise and access to a secure e-mail system. Overall, it is an excellent medium for correspondence (p. 13).

Whether or not the mentor is paid to participate in the mentoring program can also affect the relationship. In one mentoring program for first year teachers, mentors were given release time and $1,000 stipend. It was reported that the stipends and credit hours were a real incentive for the mentors. They formalized the program, gave it credibility, and communicated that the program was valued. One mentee testified that the stipend also made a difference to her. "Knowing she (my mentor) was being paid kept me from feeling I was imposing on her" (Halford, 1998, p. 17).

Matching Mentors and Mentees

In a formal mentoring program, the administrator of the program has the important task of matching a mentor with a new protégé or mentee. The administrator should take into account the personal attributes of both individuals. Van Deusen (1995) recommends that the administrator take into consideration such personality traits as linear versus random thinking, analytical versus holistic approaches to issues, introvert/extrovert characteristics, and degrees of sensitivity and apparent vulnerability. He or she also needs to consider the previous experiences of the protégé to determine where the most likely knowledge gaps may occur (p. 30).

Buddy and Williams (2001) outlined their criteria for the mentors and mentees in their program for first year school media specialists. They select mentoring pairs who are on the same school level (elementary, middle, and high school), whose schools are geographically close, and whose school populations and communities are similar.

Whenever possible, they match participants based on an informal temperament assessment and prior employment responsibilities (p. 18).

Continuous Evaluation of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentors and their protégés need to evaluate their relationships periodically. They should review their association by asking: How are we doing? Are the learning needs of the mentee being met? Are the means of communication effective? Is communication open, candid, and direct? Is communicating done frequently enough? Too frequently? (Zachary, 2000, p. 103).

Establishing a routine of periodically "checking in" offers a non-threatening approach, which is better than waiting until something goes amiss. When checking in is a customary, normative part of the relationship, it takes the pressure off (Zachary, 2000, p. 101).

Mentors should reflect on their effectiveness during the time they are working with their protégé. They need to review their relationship to see if they are acting as a positive role model by providing wise counsel and support (Sullivan, 1992, p. 26).

Benefits of Mentoring Programs

Stephen Covey in Seven Habits of Highly Effective People lists Habit 4 "Think Win-Win" (Covey, 1989, p. 206). Mentoring programs, properly designed and effectively carried out, can benefit all involved: the mentee, the mentor, the library organization and the library profession (Golian, 1996, p. 110). Mentoring produces a win-win situation for everyone by seeking mutual benefit, valuing cooperation over competition, listening more and staying in communication (Brooks, 1999, p. 55). The goals of most new employees are to be successful and satisfied in their career choices. Participating in a mentoring program can help them to achieve that goal.

> The greatest benefit of the mentoring relationship for the protégé is the growing sense of confidence, self-esteem, and empowerment. Protégés soon learn that their roles are ever changing, evolving, and unpredictable, but they gain confidence that they have the skills to cope and meet the challenges. The mentoring program gives them the assurance that someone is expecting to be called upon for help…there is no stigma attached to seeking advice and assistance. (Van Deusen, 1995, p. 31)

Mentee benefits can also include honest criticism and informal feedback, first hand advice concerning professional obligations, personalized recognition and encouragement, wisdom concerning the informal politics of the organization, and introduction to influential people (Golian, 1996, p. 111). Contrary to myth, the mentor derives many benefits from participating in a mentoring program. He or she receives a feeling of personal satisfaction for repaying a perceived debt to his or her own mentors and from assisting another professional in his or her career growth. He or she also benefit from building a new relationship with another library media specialist. "The isolation so characteristic of the profession is reduced by a close collegial relationship" (Van Deusen, 1995, p. 31). Fresh ideas and feedback from their mentee can provide the mentor with cutting edge information concerning the profession (Golian, 1996, p. 112).

Van Deusen and Kraus (1995) found that "the sponsorship of a mentor facilitates the quick assimilation of newcomers into the group. Such cohesiveness among library professionals has resulted in a unified voice in the district advocating for the program…" (p. 31). In addition, mentoring programs benefit the organization with increased productivity, increased commitment, lower rates of staff turn over, increased effectiveness in communication and cooperation, and the establishment of an organizational esprit-de-corps. They also contribute to a lower burn out rate for mentors and improved community relations, awareness and support (Golian, 1996, p. 112).

The library profession also benefits from mentoring programs. These programs encourage professional development and enhance the overall professionalism of librarianship by supporting a professional code of ethics, sharing a vision of professional services, building necessary communication and negotiation skills, and developing a unified professional reputation. By providing support in the initial phases of their careers, mentoring programs can cultivate work place diversity by empowering minorities and women (Golian, 1996, p. 113).

Summary

First year media specialists need well designed mentoring programs to support them through their initial year. When matching mentors and mentees, many factors need to be taken into consideration including geographical location and personality traits. Mentors and mentees will perform their roles better if they are given guidelines in an orientation session. The supervisor of the mentoring program should remind participants to constantly evaluate their relationship and communication. It was reported that stipends and credit hours were a real incentive for the mentors. They formalized the program, gave it credibility, and communicated that the program was valued.

Properly designed mentoring programs can benefit mentees, mentors, the school organization, and the library profession (Golian, 1996, p. 110). In reviewing the literature already written about mentoring programs for first year school media specialists, additional scholarly research would benefit the library community. Although there are articles that describe mentoring programs in several school systems, there are no published scholarly studies available about such programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Every year new library media specialists enter the profession to replace experienced colleagues who are moving or retiring or to fill positions in newly opened schools. In order for these new professionals to learn the ins and outs of the trade and to be indoctrinated into the profession, mentoring programs have been establishing in many school systems. Three of these programs are examined in this descriptive study. It used in depth interviews and a survey questionnaire method to gather data.

Description of School Systems

Three public school systems in the Atlanta metropolitan area that provided a mentoring program for their first year media specialists were selected for this research project: County A, County B and County C. Statistics are from the Georgia Department of Education 1999-2000 Georgia Public Education Report Card (2000). County A had an enrollment of 92,951 students in grades kindergarten through 12th at 119 school sites during the 1999 - 2000 school year. Fifty-three and one tenth percent of the total student population in County A was eligible to receive free or reduced lunch. County B is the largest school district included in this study. It had an enrollment of 104,203 students in grades kindergarten through 12th at 82 school sites during the1999 - 2000 school year. Seventeen and six tenth percent of the total student population in County B was eligible to receive free or reduced lunch. County C is the smallest of the three systems with an enrollment of 44,622 students in grades kindergarten through 12th at 47 school sites

during the 1999-2000 school year. Fifty-four and one tenth percent of the total student population in County C was eligible to receive free or reduced lunch.

Procedure

In order to obtain a description of the mentoring programs provided by the media services department for new media specialists in each of these school systems, the system level coordinator (or coordinators) in charge of the program was (were) interviewed. These interviews were performed through the use of a list of predetermined open-ended questions (See Appendix A). At the end of each visit, a list of new media specialists who had participated in the mentoring program during the current year was obtained. In County A there were sixteen new media specialists, in County C there were five, and in County B there were ten.

Instrumentation

After reviewing the professional literature available about mentoring programs in schools and libraries, and reflecting on the interviews with the media services coordinators, a survey questionnaire (see Appendix B) was developed that would be distributed to all of the new media specialists in County A, County B, and County C. A cover letter (see Appendix C) was also developed explaining the purpose of the research and the procedure for completing and returning the survey. It asked the new media specialists to participate in the study by providing data that could be used to develop a model-mentoring program.

A two-page survey questionnaire was developed. The first page included thirteen questions with rating scales for respondents to indicate their answers, and one multiple-choice question. These questions ask for the participants to rate their feelings about the mentoring program meetings and the relationship that they developed with their mentor.

On the second page, there were five open-ended questions, which the respondents could use to make suggestions to improve the mentoring program.

The Institutional Review Board at Georgia State University approved the proposal for this research project. This research project involved participants in three school systems; approval was granted in all three.

Data Collection

A copy of the questionnaire and cover letter, along with a self-addressed envelope, a stamped post card, and a dollar bill incentive, were sent to the five new media specialists in County C and the ten new media specialists in County B. The 16 eligible media specialists in County A were mailed the same items plus a copy of the letter of approval from the county office granting permission for the study. All of the surveys were mailed via U. S. Postal Service. The requested return date was May 25, 2001.

A post card system was used to determine who had replied to the survey. The post card included in the envelope with each survey was coded with a number to correlate to the participant. The cover letter explained that when the respondent mailed the survey, if he/she also mailed the post card, the researcher would know which media specialists did not need a follow up reminder about completing the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this research study was to create a model of a formal mentoring program for first year school media specialists. Three research questions must be answered in order to create a model. (1) What are the goals and components of a mentor program model in any field? (2) How are current mentoring programs for first year media specialists designed? (3) How could these mentoring program designs be improved?

What are the goals and components of a mentor program in any field?

By reviewing the literature available on mentoring (Cargill, 1989; Galbraith, 1991; Golian, 1996; Zachary, 2000), the basic design of a mentoring program can be outlined as follows:

Program design and responsibility. The mentoring program must be purposely designed and administered with visible support from top management. Roles and responsibilities of the mentors, mentees and administrators should be enumerated.

Recruitment, screening and matching of mentors and mentees. The manager(s) of the mentoring program should identify who the mentees will be and the characteristics required for mentor candidates. Careful consideration should be given to the criteria to be used to match mentors and mentees. Appropriate mentorship pairing is the most critical element in the mentoring program.

Orientation and training of mentors and mentees. The roles and responsibilities of mentors, mentees and administrators should be clearly communicated. Attendance at

program functions and attention to the mentoring relationship ought to be stressed. The mentor should be a source of information and psychological support to the mentee. Frequent communication should be encouraged.

Mentoring activities. The administrator of the mentoring program can support the program and maintain interest by planning activities for mentors and mentees. Methods and procedures for tracking progress and providing for continuous improvement should be identified.

Program evaluation. The program administrator(s) should create a plan for reward, recognition, and celebration of mentoring success. Benefits to the mentee, mentor, the organization, and the profession should be evident.

How are current mentoring programs for first year media specialists designed?

To establish the goals and components of mentoring programs for first year school media specialists currently in use in three school systems in the metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia area, structured interviews with the media services coordinators in each system were conducted. These interviews were performed using of a list of predetermined open-ended questions and were tape-recorded and transcribed. (See Appendix D for a Sample Transcribed Interview.) The interviews have been summarized to provide a description of the mentoring program in each system.

County A

Program design and responsibility. County A is a very large school system that currently employs almost 150 school media specialists in 119 schools. One of the three media services coordinators is the administrator of the mentoring program, although the other two coordinators assist with the planning and make presentations at the meetings. Their mentoring program has been in place for several years. During the 2000 – 2001

school year, their program addressed the needs of 16 media specialists who were new to the system.

The media services coordinators assume the responsibility of training new media specialists. They have designed a staff development class to introduce the policies, procedures, and software unique to County A school media centers. They also conduct site visits and maintain an open communication policy. All of the members of the central office media services staff willingly offer support to the school media specialists throughout the system. They are available by e-mail or telephone to answer questions at any time. Monthly meetings are held for all the school media specialists within the district to address current policies and issues.

Mentors were not paid for their participation in the program. At the end of the school year, a letter of commendation and appreciation was written to each mentor and a carbon copy was sent to his or her principal.

Recruitment, screening and matching of mentors and mentees. Mentors are carefully selected and matched to mentees. Several factors are taken into consideration including school level, geographical proximity of the schools where the mentor and mentee work, "commonalities of the student population and school communities," personality traits of the mentoring pair, and prior employment experience. Mentors must demonstrate a willingness to take the time to communicate regularly with the mentee. Requests by mentees to be matched with a particular experienced media specialist with whom they already have a personal relationship are honored.

Orientation and training of mentors and mentees. The orientation of mentors to the program is carefully planned. During teacher orientation week, "We have a brief inservice with the mentors as to what their responsibilities are, what our expectations are,

and a little descriptor of who their mentee is and their background, so that when they do meet it is not totally brand new for the mentor." (Personal communication, March 26, 2001) Mentors are told that their responsibilities include communicating with their mentee on a regular, frequent basis. E-mail, telephone calls, as well as visitations are the suggested means of interaction. Mentors are told that in their discussions and their visitations with the mentee, they should address issues or concerns that relate to classroom management, technology, collection development, the physical attractiveness of the facility, and just to help calm the nerves of their mentee. They should reassure them that their first year will be a success even though it seems overwhelming.

After this brief training, the mentors and mentees meet for a luncheon. The purpose of the luncheon is to introduce the mentor and the mentee, to present information about the mentoring program, to share the calendar of scheduled support meetings, and to discuss the responsibilities of the mentor and mentee toward their partnership.

Mentoring activities. Mentoring pairs are encouraged to communicate regularly and frequently. They are given an opportunity to exchange visits between their schools to observe collaborative planning, media center programming, facility arrangement and decoration, and staff organization.

In addition to the luncheon at the beginning of the school year, a support meeting is scheduled each semester. These meetings are held between 3:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon in a central location. The topics planned for these meetings help to prepare the new media specialists for yearly activities such as ordering and inventory, as well as giving them an opportunity to raise issues of personal concern. Time is always dedicated to sharing success stories from each mentee.

Program evaluation and benefits. Each year, County A hosts an evaluation meeting. Mentors and mentees are given the opportunity to say what worked, what did not work, and what should be improved in the mentoring program. Successful mentoring pairs are identified by the comments that they make about their relationship.

Another indicator of success is the retention rate for new media specialists. "We have had success with retaining our media specialists. One of two reasons why they would have relocated would be housing or distance from their home, or relocation out of the area, but normally in the past, I would say we have had only one media specialist to leave after her second year. All the others who have joined us in the county, have remained in the county for five plus years." (Personal communication, March 26, 2001)

County B

Program design and responsibility. County B is another very large school district that employees over 110 school media specialists at 82 school sites. The media services coordinators share the responsibility for administrating the mentoring program for first year media specialists. County B's formal mentoring program was initiated during the 2000 - 2001 school year. It addressed the needs of ten media specialists who were new to the system. Mentors were not paid for their participation in the program.

The media services department provides staff development training for new hires each summer. The course is designed to present the policies, procedures and software that are unique to County B school media centers. All members of the central office support staff are introduced. New media specialists are encouraged to call or e-mail them with questions and concerns at any time. Monthly meetings are held for all media specialists within the district to address current issues and policies.

Recruitment, screening and matching of mentors and mentees. Mentors were chosen from among the experienced media specialists already employed in the system. Those chosen were patient, kind, nurturing, and had the ability to communicate openly. They also had time to devote to helping a mentee. In many cases, mentors were matched to mentees who had interned in their media center.

Orientation and training of mentors and mentees. After the coordinators matched the mentoring pairs, mentors were told to initiate communication with their mentees. Mentors were instructed to provide support and encouragement to their mentees: to help them with County B procedures and to be available to answer questions and discuss problems. They were encouraged to communicate by e-mail, telephone, and visits.

Mentoring activities. Six meetings were scheduled throughout the year. They were held from 3:00 to 5:00 in various locations. Both mentors and mentees were encouraged to attend. Topics addressed included the media specialist evaluation instrument, materials ordering procedures, materials challenges and copyright issues, and the County B research process. Although time was allotted at every meeting for questions, one meeting was specifically planned for mentees to suggest subjects of concern to be discussed.

Program evaluation and benefits. Program evaluation was the topic of discussion at the last meeting. Comments made by mentors and mentees will improve the program for next year. Another indicator of program success is the retention rate of new media specialists. At the conclusion of the initial year for this program, only one new media specialist out of ten chose to leave her position.

County C

Program design and responsibility. County C is a medium sized school system that currently employs over 65 media specialists. The media services coordinator is responsible for the mentoring program. She has provided for the induction of new media specialist for five years. During the 2000 – 2001 school year there were five participants.

The media services coordinator assumes the responsibility for training new media specialists. They attend two days of staff development during the first few weeks of school to learn County C policies and procedures, key county personnel, and media center software. Central office media services personnel are also available by phone and e-mail to respond to any problems new media specialists might have. Quarterly meetings are held for all school media specialists. For these meetings, all of the school media specialists are divided into small groups to share ideas, issues and concerns.

Recruitment, screening and matching of mentors and mentees. The media services coordinator is the mentor for all the new media specialists in the system. She also encourages informal mentoring relationships with experienced media specialist. In most cases, new hires have an experienced media center secretary at their school to assist them.

Orientation and training of mentors and mentees. The media services coordinator assists the local school principal in the selection of a new media specialist for his/her school. The coordinator discusses her role as mentor with the new media specialist shortly after they are hired.

Mentoring activities. Available by e-mail or phone to answer questions, the coordinator is always ready to assist her mentees. To promote collegiality, quarterly small group meetings are held for all school media specialists. The coordinator plans

topics for each meeting, but questions and issues from individual media specialists are discussed as well.

Program evaluation and benefits. The coordinator evaluates the success of the mentoring program each year. Retention of new media specialists is one indicator used in program assessment. During the past five years, only one new media specialist has left County C at the end of her first year. Her decision to leave was determined by her desire to return to her home in Texas. Other participants cite the support they receive from the coordinator and central office media services staff as a key to their success during their first year as school media specialists.

Pay for mentors

Media services coordinators were also asked: "Do you think mentors should be paid for their role in training new media specialists? I have read about teacher mentoring programs where the mentor receives a stipend. The mentee knows that and is more likely to feel free to call on them for help. What do you think?"

Many of the coordinators expressed mixed feelings about paying mentors to participate in their program. One of them said, "All media specialists are of service. That is the root of our philosophy and so, yes, we help teachers and students in our classrooms, but, of course, yes, we would be happy to help colleagues." (Personal communication, March 26, 2001) Another one questioned, "Would mentees still feel free to confide in someone knowing they are paid to help them?" (Personal communication, March 15, 2001) Another commented, "Would we want mentors who are just in it for the money?" (Personal communication, April 5, 2001) Instead of a stipend, one coordinator suggested designing the program so that mentors and mentees could earn staff development credit or compensation as inservice hours.

How could these mentoring program designs be improved?

To assess the mentoring programs in these three school systems, a two-page questionnaire was developed and mailed to all the first year media specialists in County A, County B, and County C. A total of 31 questionnaires were mailed: 16 to County A, 10 to County B, and 5 to County C. Twenty-two (71%) were returned: 10 from County A, 9 from County B and 3 from County C. Twenty-two questionnaires were useable for data analysis.

Assistance with analyzing the data was provided by Don M. Segal of the Educational Research Bureau of Georgia State University. The computer software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Where appropriate, results were presented in frequencies and percentages (1999).

Survey question one established the overall feeling of the new media specialists toward the mentoring programs designed for them by their media services department. Seventeen of the twenty respondents found their program to be effective. Table 1 shows a breakdown of responses by county.

Table 1

Question 1: The mentoring program, as designed by my media services department, was a valuable experience which helped me through my first year as a media specialist.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	2	25.0
Agree	6	75.0
Total	8	100.0
County B		
Disagree	1	11.1
Agree	8	88.9
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

The next three questions allowed the respondents to appraise the meetings planned by their media services departments. Only one new media specialist did not find the topics of the meetings to be helpful. Three were neutral and 17 agreed that topics of the meetings were important to them (see Table 2).

Table 2

Question 2: Topics Addressed at the meetings were of critical importance to me.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Neutral	3	33.3
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	1	11.1
Agree	8	88.9
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

County A and County B scheduled meetings for their mentors and mentees at 3:00 in the afternoon. This time was selected so media specialists would not be pulled away from their schools during the school day or need to find a substitute. Some mentees who were involved in after school activities or had childcare problems found this meeting time inconvenient. County C meetings were scheduled during the instructional day (see Table 3).

Table 3

Question 3: The time of day the meetings were scheduled worked well for me.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Neutral	3	33.3
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	2	22.2
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

The frequency of scheduled meetings varied by county. County A had three mentor/mentee meetings throughout the year. County B had six. County C had four. Respondents were generally satisfied with the meeting schedules (see Table 4).

Table 4

Question 4: The meetings were scheduled frequently enough to provide adequate support.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Neutral	4	44.4
Agree	5	55.6
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Neutral	2	22.2
Agree	7	77.8
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

Questions 5 to 12 allow the respondents to appraise the effectiveness of their relationships with their mentors. For question five, "My mentor was a good personality match for me," in County A, 70% of the mentees agreed with the statement. In County B, 77.8% agreed. In County C, 100% agreed. Out of 22 surveys returned, three respondents did not agree that their mentor was a good personality match and two were neutral.

For question six, "My mentor gave me the support and encouragement I needed," the results followed a similar pattern. In County A, 70% of the mentees agreed with the statement. In County B, 77.8% agreed. In County C, 100% agreed. Out of 22 surveys

returned two respondents did not agree that their mentor gave them enough support and three were neutral.

"My mentor always had time to help me when I needed it," question 7, brought more mixed results (see Table 5). Three respondents felt that their mentor did not always have time to reply to them and five were neutral.

Table 5

Question 7: My mentor always had time to help me when I needed it.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	1	10.0
Neutral	3	30.0
Agree	6	60.0
Total	10	100.0
County B		
Disagree	2	22.2
Agree	7	77.8
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Neutral	2	66.7
Agree	1	33.3
Total	3	100.00

Questions 8, 9, 10, and 11 help to categorize the types of help mentors provided to their mentees (see Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9). Of the 22 surveys returned, six mentees did not

agree that their mentor helped them with professional issues. Seven did not agree that their mentor helped with technological concerns. Six did not agree that their mentor helped with organizational dynamics, and four did not agree that their mentor helped with organizational tips.

Table 6

Question 8: My mentor helped me with professional issues.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	2	22.2
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	3	33.3
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

Table 7

Question 9: My mentor helped me with technological concerns.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	2	22.2
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	1	11.1
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	7	77.8
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Neutral	2	66.7
Agree	1	33.3
Total	3	100.0

Table 8

Question 10: My mentor helped me with organizational dynamics.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	2	22.2
Neutral	2	22.2
Agree	5	55.6
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	1	11.1
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	7	77.8
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

Table 9

Question 11: My mentor helped me with operational tips.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	2	22.2
Neutral	1	11.1
Agree	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	1	11.1
Agree	8	88.9
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Agree	3	100.0

Question 12 was "If I knew that my mentor was being paid to help me, I would have contacted him/her more often." In County A and County B, mentors were selected from among the pool of experienced media specialists and were not paid to participate in the program, although it required them to take time from work at their own school and attend meetings beyond the normal school day. In County C, the media services coordinator was the designated mentor for all of the new media specialists as part of her job description. The mentees opinions on this question are tabulated in Table 10.

Table 10

Question 12: If I knew that my mentor was being paid to help me, I would have contacted him/her more often.

County	Frequency	Valid Percent
County A		
Disagree	1	11.1
Agree	8	88.9
Total	9	100.0
County B		
Disagree	4	44.4
Neutral	2	22.2
Agree	3	33.3
Total	9	100.0
County C		
Disagree	1	33.3
Neutral	2	66.7
Total	3	100.0

Of the 22 surveys returned, 11 respondents agreed that they would have called on their mentor for assistance more often if they knew that the mentor was being paid to help them. Six disagreed and four were neutral.

Question 13, "How often did you communicate with your mentor?" allows us to check the frequency of contact between mentors and mentees. Daily contact was

reported by 31.8%. Weekly contact was reported by 27.3%. "Once a month" was circled by 31.8%. One mentee reported that they only saw their mentor at meetings and one mentee reported that they never had any contact with their assigned mentor.

The next question allowed for five responses to chart the type of communication used most frequently by mentors and mentees. "If your mentor was not working in the same building, how did you communicate?" The survey instructed respondents to circle all the types of communication that they had used during the year. Six of the media specialists included in this survey had personal contact daily with their mentor because they worked in the same media center. E-mail was used by 68.2% of the mentees. Telephone calls were employed by 54.5% of mentees. Visits were exchanged by 36.4% of mentors and mentees. And 54.5% of mentees saw their mentors at meetings.

On the second page of the survey there were five open-ended questions. Responses to these questions reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the current mentoring programs. (See Appendix E for Comments on the survey.)

Question 15 was "Are there problems that exist in your job which were not addressed by your mentor or the meetings? What are they?" There were a wide variety of subjects mentioned in the replies on the surveys. Various problems with administrators were pointed out on five surveys. Two respondents wanted more help with discipline. More training was requested in the use of software, video production, equipment troubleshooting, satellite recording, and inventory.

Question 16 was "Which parts of the mentoring program (i.e. the meetings, your mentor, etc.) were the most helpful to you?" Answers fell into three categories. Eleven respondents cited the meetings as being most helpful. Seven replied that their mentor

was the most helpful. Three new media specialists did not feel that the program had helped them at all.

Question 17 was "What was the best advice your mentor gave you?" Nine mentees recalled supportive comments such as "Just do the best you can and don't worry about the things you can't control" or "Learn from your first year to make your second year better." Seven others mentioned operational tips, for instance: "Buy books from Bound to Stay Bound," "Reread every e-mail before you send it," "When it comes to deadlines, don't underestimate and don't procrastinate," and "Always make time for lunch – it is a great way to get to know the other staff." One person said that her mentor did not give her any good advice.

Question 18 was "Are you returning to your position next year? Has your relationship with your mentor affected that decision? How?" Responses fell into two categories. The overwhelming majority of first year media specialists who responded to this question, 18 out of 21, replied that they would be returning to the same job next year. Nine agreed that their mentor had influenced their decision. Ten did not. Two were neutral. One media specialist in each county plans to leave at the end of his or her first year. Two of the three wanted to relocate to be closer to home. The other one wrote, "This decision is solely mine, but my mentor knew of my hostile working conditions and supported it."

The final question, 19, was "How could the mentoring program be improved?" Finding ways for mentors and mentees to spend more time together was the number one suggestion repeated by five respondents. In County A, which only had three meetings for mentors and mentees, two respondents suggested more meetings and one suggested required attendance. In County B, one respondent suggested that mentors and mentees

should be introduced during orientation and another suggested that mentors and mentees should be from the same cluster. One new media specialist commented, "My experience has been almost perfect. The feature which really worked for me was not feeling obligated to meet regularly, but I knew I could call my mentor anytime I had a question/concern."

CHAPTER 5

A MODEL MENTORING PROGRAM FOR FIRST YEAR SCHOOL MEDIA SPECIALIST

Program Design and Responsibility

This model was created upon a review of the literature and data collected in this study. One administrator or director in the library media services department should be responsible for designing and implementing the mentoring program. They should define the roles and responsibilities of the administrator, the mentors, and the mentees. The administrator should plan the program, initiate it and provide visible support to the participants. The mentors should be experienced school media specialists who have been selected to provide assistance and guidance to the new school media specialists. The mentor's role is not the same as a supervisor; The mentor is a coach, advisor, and confidant who can provide information and psychological support.

A formal mentoring program is not a substitute for inservice training for new school media specialists. Staff development should be planned to teach them district policies and procedures, how to use media center management software, and equipment troubleshooting. The director or coordinator and central office staff need to maintain an open communication policy that supports all of the school media specialists in the district by responding promptly to e-mail and telephone requests for assistance. The director or coordinator should visit the new school media specialist in his or her school.

Recruitment, Screening and Matching of Mentors and Mentees

Program participation by mentors and mentees should be voluntary. All first year school media specialists deserve to have an active mentor who willingly responds to their requests and share his or her time. Selecting appropriate mentors is critical to the success of the program and the acculturation of the mentee into the profession and the community. A mentor should display confidence, security, flexibility, and a warm and caring personality. They should be able to analyze tasks, to listen actively, to assess work, to nurture, to challenge and provide constructive feedback. Other factors to consider include school level, geographical proximity of the schools where the mentor and mentee work, commonalities of the student population and school communities, personality traits of the mentoring pair, and prior employment experience.

Orientation and Training of Mentors and Mentees

Roles of the mentors and mentees should be clearly communicated at an orientation session. Attendance at program functions and attention to the mentoring relationship ought to be stressed. Training should contain background on the mentoring process and suggestions for developing the mentor/mentee relationship. Mentors need to be told that they are responsible for communicating with their mentee on a regular, frequent basis by e-mail, telephone calls, and visits. Mentors need to know that in their discussions with the mentee, they should address issues or concerns that relate to technical knowledge, local school culture and, most importantly, they should provide psychological support and encouragement. They ought to reassure their mentee that their first year will be a success even though it seems overwhelming.

Mentees should be encouraged to call on their mentor for help whenever they need it. They should understand that the mentor is not a supervisor, but instead a collaborator and advocate. Mentees should develop a disposition to learn, to listen, to take advice and use it, and to grow professionally (Golian, 1996, p. 105).

Mentoring Activities

An informal introductory meeting such as a luncheon should be planned to introduce the mentors and mentees. The meeting ought to include enough time for them to get acquainted. In many cases, mentors and mentees will work in separate schools. A positive introductory experience will allow a bond to develop. A plan for efficient communication needs to be made from the beginning of the partnership. Regular periodic contact initiated by the mentor can help to overcome reluctance on the part of the mentee to impose on their time (Zachary, 2000 p. 128).

The administrator must find the middle ground between too much structure and too little. They should plan several mentor/mentee meetings throughout the year. Meetings should include the scheduled discussion of timely topics, as well as time for mentors and mentees to share their experiences, concerns and questions.

The program administrator should occasionally check in with mentors and mentees to encourage them to communicate. Visits between school media centers should be suggested.

Program Evaluation and Benefits

Mentoring programs evolve and improve with experience. Administrators should allow participants to discuss what worked, what did not and make suggestions for improvement. Program participation should be recognized and commended.

Mentoring programs, properly designed and effectively carried out, can benefit all involved: the mentee, the mentor, the library organization and the library profession. Over time, mentoring can contribute to a growing esprit de corps and produce a cohesive, caring community among school media professionals.

Unless all the meetings for this program are held during the school day and substitutes are provided, monetary compensation for mentors and new media specialists should be considered. School media specialists are characteristically altruistic, nurturing, and caring, but they are also professionals who deserve to be paid for their time.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

First year school media specialists need well-designed mentoring programs. A majority of the new school media specialists who responded to the survey agreed that the program they participated in helped them through their initial year. Periodic meetings for administrators, mentors, and mentees to discuss appropriate topics were of critical importance.

Selecting appropriate mentors who will unselfishly share their time from the pool of experienced school media specialist is vital to the success of the program and the assimilation of the mentee into the profession and the community. Mentees who did not agree that their mentor gave them the support they needed rarely or never communicated with their mentor. Possible problems could be overcome by communicating expectations of both mentors and mentees in an orientation session.

Successful mentoring pairs took advantage of several avenues of communication. Survey responses indicated that dyads that did not work in the same building communicated by e-mail and the telephone most frequently. Only 36% exchanged visits.

The retention rate of first year school media specialists is very high. Eighteen of 21 mentees indicated that they would return to their current positions next year. The district coordinators interviewed all agreed that it is uncommon for media specialists to leave after only one year on the job. One commented that for media specialists, the Master's degree program well prepared them for the new challenges they would encounter.

First year school media specialists benefited from support from both the central office and their mentors. Eleven mentees indicated that the support they received from the coordinator and central office media services staff was a key to their success. Seven replied that their relationship with their mentor largely contributed to their decision to stay.

On the issue of compensation for program participants, a large number of survey respondents (11 of 22) indicated that they would have been more comfortable calling their mentor for help if they knew that the mentor was being paid. Administrators of mentoring programs should consider some means of recompense, particularly if meetings are held beyond regular school hours. Stipends and/or staff development credit could be awarded.

Future Investigations

After a review of the literature already written about mentoring programs for first year school media specialists, additional scholarly research would benefit the library community. Although there are a few articles that describe mentoring programs in several school systems, there are no published scholarly studies available about such programs.

The research for this paper was conducted in school systems with over 40,000 students. Plans to provide mentors to first year school media specialists in smaller school districts also need to be studied. In some cases, out of district mentoring could be arranged by professional organizations. Electronic discussion lists such as LM_NET provide electronic links to the school library community at large, which could be tapped to provide information and support.

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APPENDIX A

Questions for Media Services Coordinators

Questions for Media Services Coordinators:

Name _____ System _____

Why do you have a mentoring program for media specialists?

It is often said that the reason for having mentoring programs for first year teachers, is to give them enough support so that their first year of teaching will be successful and they will stay in the profession. Is this true for media speciaslists also? Is there a problem with retaining media specialists beyond the first year?

Who is responsible for planning your mentoring program?

How many new media specialists have you added over the last five years in your system?

In your program, what do you call your experienced media specialists and first year media specialists? I. E.: Mentor and mentee? Mentor and protégé? (Guide and side?)

How do you recruit mentor media specialists?

How do you match mentors with mentees?

How would you define the responsibilities of the mentors?

Do you have an orientation session for your mentors? A. If yes, how long is it?
B. What topics do you include in your mentor training?

How do you introduce your mentors to your mentees?

Do you plan mentor/mentee meetings? If so, how many?

What time do they usually meet? If it is during the school day, do you provide a substitute?

Do your mentor/mentee meetings have designated themes for discussion?

Unless they are in a high school, most mentors and mentees are not in the same building. How do you think they usually communicate?

How do you encourage your mentors and mentees to overcome the problems of time and distance?

How do you identify successful mentoring pairs?

Do you reward successful mentors? Mentees?

Do you think mentors should be paid for their role in training new media specialists? (I have read about teacher mentoring programs where the mentor receives a stipend. The mentee knows that and is more likely to feel free to call on them for help. What do you think?)

What changes have you considered for next year?

Do you think your program provides enough support for new media specialists so their first year is successful?

APPENDIX B

Survey Questionaire Sent to First Year Media Specialists

Mentoring Program Questionnaire

Please think about your experience as a first year media specialist and your involvement in the mentoring program provided by your media services department to answer the following questions.
Indicate which system you work for:
Clayton County Schools _____ DeKalb County Schools _____ Gwinnett County Schools _____

Please read the following statements. Mark on the continuum how you feel about each one.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
The mentoring program, as designed by my media services department, was a valuable experience which helped me through my first year as a media specialist.	1	2	3	4	5
Mentoring meetings scheduled by your coordinator:					
The topics addressed in the meetings were of critical interest to me.	1	2	3	4	5
The time of day the meetings were scheduled worked well for me.	1	2	3	4	5
The meetings were scheduled frequently enough to provide adequate support.	1	2	3	4	5
Your relationship with your mentor:					
My mentor was a good personality match for me.	1	2	3	4	5
My mentor gave me the support and encouragement I needed.	1	2	3	4	5
My mentor always had time to help me when I needed it.	1	2	3	4	5
My mentor helped me with:					
Professional Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Technological Concerns	1	2	3	4	5
Organizational Dynamics	1	2	3	4	5
Operational Tips	1	2	3	4	5
If I knew that my mentor was being paid to help me, I would have contacted him/her more often.	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle your answer:

How often did you communicate with your mentor? Never At meetings only Monthly Weekly Daily

If your mentor was **not** working in the same building, how did you communicate? (Please circle all that apply.)

My mentor was in the same building. E-Mail Telephone Visits At Meetings Other_____

Please thoughtfully consider and answer each of the questions below. You may use the additional space on the back of this sheet if you need to.

Are there problems that exist in your job which were not addressed by your mentor or the meetings?_____
What are they?

Which parts of the mentoring program (i.e. the meetings, your mentor, etc.) were the most helpful to you?

What was the best advice your mentor gave you?

Are you planning to return to your position next year? _____ Has your relationship with your mentor affected this decision?_____ How?

How could the mentoring program be improved?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX C

Cover Letter sent to First Year Media Specialists

May 5, 2001

Dear Fellow Media Specialists,

During your first year as a school media specialist, you have participated in a mentoring program designed to provide the information and support you need to make your initial year a success. Although the program you participated in was thoughtfully planned, I would like for you to reflect on it and make suggestions that could improve the design of a future mentoring program.

Please take about ten minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. The enclosed cash is a small token of my appreciation for you time. Your responses will remain confidential. The survey and the results are in partial fulfillment of the Specialist in Education Degree at Georgia State University.

Your consent of participation will be demonstrated by your completion and return of the questionnaire. The enclosed self-addressed envelope is being provided for your convenience in returning the completed survey by Friday, May 25, 2001. I am also including an addressed postcard with a code number on the back. When you mail your completed questionnaire, please mail the postcard separately. This will allow me to know that you have returned your questionnaire without betraying its confidentiality.

Thank you for taking the time to make a difference for tomorrow's media specialists. Results of this study will be available upon request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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APPENDIX D

Sample Transcript from Interview with County Coordinators

Sample Transcript from Interview with County Coordinators

System: County A Date: March 26, 2001

Interview was conducted with three coordinators: AA, AB, and AC.

Why do you have a mentoring program for media specialists?

AA – We feel like new media specialists come out of the programs of colleges and schools excellently prepared to run a media center based on *Information Power*. They know about collaboration. They know about technology and integrating technology, etc. What they don't know is the day-to-day, nitty-gritty County A policy uniqueness and these small items bog us down and the mentoring program is designed to introduce these new media specialists to the way County A does things, to make them more comfortable and to answer their questions throughout their first and second years, because things change.

It is often said that the reason for having mentoring programs for first year teachers, is to give them enough support so that their first year of teaching will be successful and they will stay in the profession. Is this true for media specialists also? Is there a problem with retaining media specialists beyond the first year?

AB – We have not had that problem here in County A. We have had success with retaining our media specialists. One of two reasons why they would have relocated would be housing or distance from their home, or relocation out of the area, but normally in the past, I would say we have had only one media specialist to leave after her second year. All the others who have joined us in the county have remained in the county for five plus years.
Elaine - When I talked to [the coordinator] in County B she said the same thing and I was a little surprised at that, but apparently people who decide to be media specialists really what to be media specialists.
AB – I think the support they receive is a real big plus to assure them that they can be successful, that they are being successful and what they do not accomplish the first year, they will still have an opportunity to achieve those goals.
AC – I think that as Sherry was hinting at in the meeting, there are things to learn the second year, the third year and so on and the support of our mentoring program in County A doesn't stop with just the first year. I think they continue to feel supported.

Who is responsible for planning your mentoring program?

AB – I have the major portion of the responsibility, the accountability of the responsibility, but AC, AA and the other individuals in educational media also support that endeavor.

How many new media specialists have you added over the last five years in your system?

AA – We averaged up until last year about ten per year. And last year we had twenty vacancies and we filled sixteen or seventeen. We still have three or four openings. And this year even before contracts, we were counting twelve openings, so anywhere from ten to fifteen per year for next year and last year. And at least ten for each previous year.
AB – So forty would not be an under estimation.
AA – And that's almost a third of our media population over the last five years. We have 148 media specialists
Elaine – I was thinking that a lot of the people I would have known when I worked in County A fifteen years ago probably are moving into retirement. I would imagine that is a lot of the

turnover – people reaching that age.
AB – We have had a minor exodus with retirement, but it is still waiting to come.
Elaine – It is still out there.
AA – We had three that retired last year? Maybe three, four, five in the last year and a half.
AB - But not a great exodus. Not ten or twelve.
AA – We can count several who are eligible now.
Elaine – But they still like working so much that they are still there?
AA – Sure.

In your program, what do you call your experienced media specialists and first year media specialists? I. E.: Mentor and mentee? Mentor and protégé? (Guide and side?)

AB – Mentor, mentee.

How do you recruit mentor media specialists? How do you match mentors with mentees?

AB – We identify where the openings are and then we identify media specialists that are geographically close to that position of the new media specialist's school. Then we look at the temperament of the media specialists in that geographical area and seek to match the temperament of the mentor with that which we perceive to be that of the mentee. Also the strengths of the mentor, if it's technology, collection development, then we also bring that to bear upon who is selected to be matched with the mentee. We also look at grade level - so elementary with elementary, middle school with middle school, etc.

How would you define the responsibilities of the mentors?

AB – We ask our mentors to communicate on a regular, frequent basis with the mentee. And they are doing that via e-mail, telephone calls, as well as visitations. We also ask that in their discussions and their visitations with the mentee, the mentor should address issues or concern as it relates to classroom management, technology, collection development, the physical attractiveness of the facility, and just to help calm their nerves – that they will be successful this first year even though it seems overwhelming.

Do you have an orientation session for your mentors? (A. If yes, how long is it? B. What topics do you include in your mentor training? How do you introduce your mentors to your mentees?)

AB – We have an orientation session at the beginning of the year. They have new teacher orientation and the media specialists are pulled out by themselves. So we have a luncheon where the mentor meets the mentee. And just prior to the mentee's arriving at the luncheon, we have a brief inservice with the mentors as to what their responsibilities are, what our expectations are and a little descriptor of who their mentee is and their background, so that when they do meet it is not totally brand new for the mentor. And the mentee receives information about who their mentor is going to be, so that gives them conversation.
Elaine – In County B, that is usually just before the normal workdays. It would be the week before our normal workdays, so the mentors would be there a little bit before they are actually scheduled to be back at work.

Do you plan mentor/mentee meetings? If so, how many?

AB – For example, today was a support meeting. When we changed to the semester system, we have now one each semester. We supplement that with that with the staff development day. We have three a year. One is the beginning of the year. One is for staff development, they meet for lunch – they brown bag it for lunch after the staff development activity. And one in the second semester, which was today. So they are meeting about three times a year.
AA – We also meet with everybody once a month at the monthly meeting. And we are always available for them.
Elaine – And the mentor/mentee probably sit together and make sure that they feel accepted in the group and that there is someone who knows them and wants to talk to them and that sort of thing which is very important.
AB – We try to keep a follow up of our e-mail to our mentors and ask them have you contacted your mentee lately? And if they have not, then they are nudged to get on the ball.

What time do they usually meet? If it is during the school day, do you provide a substitute?

AB - Just as we met today, from 3 to 4 after school, except for the staff development day when we have lunch together.

Do your mentor/mentee meetings have designated themes for discussion?

AB – Things are very generic to the time of the year. For example, today was the end of the year, what do we do now in preparation for the ending of the year. At the beginning of the year, what to expect for the first semester. Just your concerns, your celebrations.

Unless they are in a high school, most mentors and mentees are not in the same building. How do you think they usually communicate?

AB - Once again by e-mail. And when we go out for our supervisory visits, we can perhaps access when there is a need for the mentor to have a conversation on a particular topic to support the mentee. So e-mail, telephone, written correspondence by internal courier service.

How do you encourage your mentors and mentees to overcome the problems of time and distance?

AB – Again, sitting together at meetings, e-mailing, visitation.

How do you identify successful mentoring pairs?

AB – Well, I think as you heard today, it is almost a personal testimony of the mentor and the mentee. I think from Towers you heard Jane say how much she enjoyed working with Kay. And how Judith said that even though she is at one school and Connie is at another school, they just seem to enjoy talking, sharing ideas. So how do we identify the success? They tell us.

Do you reward successful mentors? Mentees?

AB – In a small way, we send a letter of appreciation and commendation to the media specialist and cc it to their principal. In the past we put a small token of a box of chocolate or some other treat for their efforts. But there is not a stipend for it.

AC – Just before we go on, I would like to tell you that in addition to this mentor/mentee program that we are describing, there also is time at the beginning of the year, concentrated at the first, that we have new media specialists meetings, staff development courses, and we immerse them as much as possible, about the County A procedures so that they are not left up to the mentor, but it is also nurturing and I would see it as support and help.
AA – We have done this for the past two years. We have a formal staff development class, which is not mandatory, but most of our new people take it and receive 1 SDU. It meets three Tuesdays in a row. And the person who teaches it is a retiree who works for us during the year, on special projects. She brings in Kathy to talk about technology; she brings in all of us to do different things. It is well received.

Do you think mentors should be paid for their role in training new media specialists? (I have read about teacher mentoring programs where the mentor receives a stipend. The mentee knows that and is more likely to feel free to call on them for help. What do you think?)

AA – That is an interesting concept which we have not thought about. It could be easily done. We could make it a staff development proposal, and do a stipend for a summer class where we communicate with them, do the little training and then give them certain things which they have to complete during the year and at the end of the year give them a stipend. That would be a possibility to look at.
AB – Another strategy in addition to that, there is a new teacher support program that the staff development department offers for the school system and we in educational media feel that we should not be running a parallel program. That our mentors should be part of that new teacher support program that is offered through staff development and they receive a stipend. Our media specialists are doing just as much as the teacher support. It would be nice if our mentors could be grafted into that program.
AA – That would be something for our department to look into.
AC – I do think that the mentors are happy because they feel that we are considering them leaders, and that we are asking them to do more. But all media specialists are of service. That is the root of our philosophy and so, yes, we help teachers and students in our classrooms, but, of course, yes, we would be happy to help colleagues. And so those people that you saw today that were the mentors, I would not guess that a stipend, pay, reward, anything would be a thought, they are just happy to help. They have been there before and are happy they know something that somebody else could learn.
AB – I would like to add that while we have a formal mentor for the new media specialists, there is an informal mentoring program that occurs for new media specialists. New media specialists will reach back to their classmates in graduate school, or they will reach out for media specialists that they have known before they joined County A. So there is an informal network that is under girding that oftentimes we can't know all that is going on, but they are receiving the support formally and informally.

What changes have you considered for next year?

AC – I think that, yes, we always want to refine and one thing that I could see that we would want to change for next year would be the brown bag lunch that AB spoke of on staff development day, because our staff development day may be different next year. So each year we look at the calendar, and each year we access needs and depending on how the monthly meetings fall and what topics are discussed there, and depending on how many people we are working on, I think changes are naturally occurring, but I think that the program that we have that AB leads in the County A Schools is good. And I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel in any way.
AA – Just refining. We are proud of AB.
AB – It is a trio. I do want to say that the mentors that you heard today are very actively involved.

There are some that I question if they are as supportive as they should be. And so perhaps we need a little more monitoring of the communication between the mentor and the mentees. If some of the mentors are getting weary of the journey half way through, maybe we need to change that support they are providing. We don't want anyone to be left feeling as if they are left out and not having attention.

Do you think your program provides enough support for new media specialists so their first year is successful?

AB – I would say that the retention rate is a good documentation and as you saw today, AC, AA, Sherry, Kathy, provide an under girding, a safety net. Unless someone intentionally wants to fall out of the safety net, they have a wealth of support - specialized, generalized.
AA – But the mentor provides the initial support, initial information, but they can come to us. We have a sheet with all of our duties, and they know who to come to for their questions.
AC – As we try to attend the learning styles of students, we also attend the learning styles of library media specialists. If they are paper people, they get it in paper. If they are electronic, they get it through the e-mail, on our intranet site, whatever all of that is. If they are person to person, they get that. So however it is that they feel most comfortable, they can find the support and help that they need. They don't have to rely on a mentor. They don't have to call us at the county level. They can choose their style and find support.
AB – The department's intranet site is expanding in it's delivery of information and archiving, and many new media specialists have indicated that they have used the intranet site on several occasions, so that is an assurance to us it is working and that we need to continue to add information to that electronic method as well.
AC – We have a new photo directory, and if you are a new media specialists or not, you are able to look on the intranet site and see, Oh that school is next door to me. I pass it on the way to work. I wonder who the media specialist is there? Then you can identify that person and then transfer that visual to meeting them at the general or large group meeting. So we have just lots of ways of helping media specialists.
Elaine – I remember calling people when I worked in County A and saying "I am out of this bulb, can I run over there and get one? Please?" And running over to someone's nearby school and then paying them back. We have always supported each other. It is a very important part of being a media specialist – having the support laterally and from the top, and from your clerk. It just does not work if you don't have these people who know what they are talking about helping you all the way.
AB – I don't want to tire you out, but the media specialists recognize those who are the experts in the field, those who have wonderful web pages for their school, those who have wonderful storytelling, wonderful activities, and so they seek those experts and those media specialists do not mind sharing their expertise. They still loan laminating film though!
Elaine – I do agree with you all, the many people that I have been involved with over these many years as a media specialist, they are almost always so service oriented. They are almost always willing to go two steps out of their way to help anybody who comes along and I think that is one of the real strengths of who we are.

APPENDIX E

Comments Written on the Survey

Comments Written on the Survey

Are there problems that exist in your job which were not addressed by your mentor or the meetings? What are they?

County A:

Clerk is out training for another job in school. We have to do her work.

Discipline (students). Negative attitude of the clerk.

Having the library used for things other than student instruction such as meetings and testing during school hours.

Areas of Spectrum that was not available for practice on.

I did not meet with my mentor often. She did not attend any meetings of the mentors and new media specialists.

There always are the little things that one encounters in his or her own school and school system (i.e. discipline seems to be a big problem at our school), but that was not discussed at any time in our meetings (other than generally.)

County B:

I had questions about how to do inventory and wanted to do lessons.

There is a lot power outages at the school I work in which means we do not get satellite or Channel One at certain times. This is frustrating! Teachers are counting on programs. There is nothing my mentor can do to help.

There needs to be added training for new media specialists in the use of the video production equipment for the news team, with a strong emphases on Casablanca.

Minor equipment use and trouble shooting.

Specials, although I handled it myself.

Unrealistic expectations by the principal – how to handle this.

Our school will not hold report cards of children with lost books. It is county policy and they will for textbooks, so I'm not sure how to handle this.

My mentor was more than a mentor. She became my confident and addressed most pertinent issues.

County C:

No.

No. I had worked with her last year prior to being placed.

Yes. Administrator.

Which parts of the mentoring program (i.e. the meetings, your mentor, etc.) were the most helpful to you?

County A:

I thought it was business as if there were no mentoring program.

The meetings. Actually the support of the Ed Media Staff and people like Juanita, Pat, Pam & others were the best part.

My mentor, also my co-worker, is wonderful to work with. She has been an exceptional resource for me concerning professional and job related issues.

I could call on my mentor at any time with any concern and she was always helpful.

The most helpful thing was organizing a daily routine and procedures for students and teachers.

This program was not helpful to me.

The initial meeting (actually a luncheon) was extremely helpful because it allowed us to speak face to face. Also, my frequent emails to her helped me a lot.

Both were very helpful. The meetings helped with general information and when I had specific questions, I contacted my mentor.

County B:

The opportunity to socialize away from school settings w/new media specialists gave us a little "down time." This setting gave us a chance to be more at ease as we "vented" and listened to one another.

I only attended one meeting & my mentor was not at the meeting.

Just having someone there to ask questions, get help, and feel welcomed to the program.

It was very helpful to have a thorough explanation of the evaluation process. It let me know what my responsibilities were, as far as working with my evaluator.

I was lucky enough to have two mentors who have many years of experience working in media centers.

Research process meeting topics.

Both meetings and my mentor were helpful to me. One meeting in particular – on how to teach research skills & the research process – was extremely helpful. I took this information back to my school & successfully implemented lessons with kindergarten on research skills. My mentor was always available for me to call with questions. She and her clerk always had time for me!

The meetings.

My mentor was most helpful to me. She advised me very wisely and referred me when necessary.

County C:

Technical issues and how to handle paperwork.

The meetings at her office.

All issues were important.

What was the best advice your mentor gave you?

County A:

Don't remember any – I'm returning to work after years out with family. I do have over a decade of media center experience, but much is still new.

Don't sweat the small stuff. Prioritize.

My mentor has given me all sorts of advice about everything concerning library procedures and policies, weeding, inventory, SAC's – we've done it all this year.

"You will find that the work never gets done." Knowing that ahead of time helped to lessen the anxiety from time to time.

To call someone else when dealing with a technical issue.

Just to do the best that I can and not worry about the things that I can't control.

Take a deep breath, you're doing fine.

When it comes time to meet deadlines, don't underestimate and don't procrastinate. My mentor puts tasks that have deadlines as TOP priority. That way, you will feel less stress & pressure when deadlines roll around.

County B:

Learn from your first year to make your second year better.

Reread every email before you send it. Make sure it expresses what you intend.

You have to work at developing a good rapport/working arrangement with the faculty to have a successful media center.

Be proud of what you have accomplished and not the list of things you didn't get to.

Buy books from Bound to Stay Bound. Always make time for lunch – it is a great way to get to know other staff, which leads to better collaboration.

To take things one day at a time.

County C:

RELAX…It all works out!

You can do it!

Don't say no: say let's find a way to make it happen.

Are you planning to return to your position next year? Has your relationship with your mentor affected that decision? How?

County A:

Yes. Not necessarily. I was glad to have the other media specialist as it might have been exasperating to try to "go back" without having another around.

Yes. Yes. She has a relaxed attitude about her job and her goals.

Yes. Yes. I love my co-worker and the school I am at. I look forward to returning next year and learning even more.

Yes. Yes. I liked the support I received from her.

Yes. Yes. My mentor is also the second media specialist. We have developed a highly functionaling media center. We have different strong points causing us to work well as a team.

Yes. N/A

Yes. No.

Yes. Not really.

No. No. I'm trying to relocate nearer home.

County B:

Yes. No.

Yes. No.

Yes. Yes. We have developed a very strong, supportive collaborative relationship. Mentor sessions gave us an additional chance to talk outside of the school setting.

Yes. Yes. They lobbied w/our principal to get me hired full time for next year instead of part time.

Yes. No.

Yes. Not really. I know if I have questions she will be happy to help me, but that is no why I am planning to return to my position next year. I have learned so much this year, I really enjoy my "team", I want to experience being an "experienced Media Specialist." These are reasons why I am returning.

Yes. No.

No. Partly. This decision is solely mine, but my mentor knew of my hostile working conditions and supported it.

Yes. Not really. We didn't have that much connection! Didn't get to talk that much.

County C.

No. No.

Yes. Yes. I'll be fine as long as Cindy is.

Yes. Yes. I know she's there for me.

How could the mentoring program be improved?

County A:

For people to determine to have a serious mentoring program. I did come to work late in school year.

It would have been nice to have gone out for a cup of coffee or even a meal after work one day to discuss all the things that crop up with a new job.

My experience has been almost perfect. The feature which really worked for me was not feeling obligated to meet regularly, but I knew I could call my mentor anytime I had a question/concern.

An outline of issues and instructions for use of all equipment would be helpful. I would also like to be trained on the job of TSS. Many of the responsibilities of the TSS could also be done by the media specialist.

Better personality matches. Required attendance by the mentor at meetings.

More planned meetings throughout the year.

If new media specialist meetings were spread out and help closer to the time the information was needed, it would be helpful. (For example, if C-50's and M-5's were discussed later in the year when we were discarding materials or needing to have equipment repaired it would make more sense.)

County B:

I think the mentor should be in the same cluster and there should be time allotted to visit each others schools during the school day.

Sometimes it's good to just have "gripe" sessions to get your frustrations out. Maybe there could be a meeting w/out a specific topic where we can come and talk about ideas, frustrations, good news in the media center, etc.

As an experienced media specialist returning to County B, I also felt that the mentor training was helpful – it is a great way to get to know people in a BIG county and answer many of the little daily questions that came up.

Not sure.

More contact with mentor.

Let the Mentors & Mentees meet during Orientation and give them time to get to know each other a bit. Have Mentor's & Mentee's schools be relatively close to each other – in the same cluster, if possible. This would allow for them getting together more, if necessary.

Initially, I met with my mentor, but there was no regular contact. A weekly check-in or bi-weekly check-in with my mentor would have been good.

I wished my mentor stayed with me in same building. She was my rock. However in cases where both mentor & mentee can't be in the same building, the program should address the issue of monthly or periodical visits.

County C

More time with each other.

Additional Comments:

We often e-mailed each other but only spoke in person at our monthly media specialists meeting.

The other mentor I saw for several days. Then never. Those days were helpful.

I had two mentors. One I worked with daily. She would help if I asked. However, I need detailed info on how to load a disk of processing on to computer. She can do it but not tell me how to do it.

Only one meeting at which time I learned I had mentors. I'm not sure other librarian I work with even knows she is a mentor.